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**HEADLINE:** CASTALIA DEMOLITION TALK SPARKS SELLERS' REGRET;  
PREVIOUS OWNERS URGE SCHOOL TO LET STONE HOUSE STAND

**BYLINE:** Edward Gunts, Sun architecture critic

**BODY:**

Johns Hopkins University professor James Harris says he and his wife thought they had found the perfect steward for their home of 27 years when they agreed to sell it to Calvert School in 2005.

They were so delighted with the buyer, Harris said, that they sold the house for \$400,000 less than its appraised value of \$1.8 million and then donated \$100,000 to the school to fund an educational program for students with special learning needs.

But this fall, they're having misgivings about selling to the school, even though the large stone house at 200 Tuscany Road was built by its first headmaster, Virgil Hillyer.

The reason for their change of heart: The school's leaders disclosed in October that they are thinking about tearing down the house to make way for an amphitheater, and want the approval of surrounding community groups.

"Had we known that they would propose to demolish the house, we never would have sold it to them," said Harris, a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, pediatrics and mental hygiene at the Hopkins Medical School and director of its developmental neuropsychiatry program. He is married to Cathy DeAngelis, vice dean for academic affairs and faculty at Hopkins' medical school from 1991 to 2000 and now editor of JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association, and editor in chief of the AMA Archives medical journals.

The hillside dwelling was designed by the noted architect Laurence Hall Fowler and occupies a 1.06-acre wooded site. Since buying it two years ago, the school has not furnished it or begun using it on a regular basis - a source of concern to Harris and DeAngelis.

"We wanted to sell the house to them because we thought they would honor its legacy," Harris said. "We feel let down by them and disappointed that they have not maintained the house or appreciated its history as we expected they would."

Harris and DeAngelis are part of a contingent of neighbors, past residents, preservationists and others who have voiced objections to the idea of demolishing Castalia, part of the Tuscany Canterbury federal historic district.

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A.J. O'Brien, president of the Tuscany Canterbury Neighborhood Association, said he has received more than 30 e-mails from association members who don't want the house to disappear. "So far, the sentiment is 100 percent" against demolition, he said last week. "I haven't gotten one person to e-mail me otherwise. People are pretty passionate about this."

A citywide preservation group, Baltimore Heritage, has asked Baltimore's Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation to add the property to the city's landmark list, to protect it from demolition.

"This is not a close call," said Baltimore Heritage executive director Johns Hopkins, a distant relative of the founder of the university. "It's associated with a noted educator and an eminent architect. It's worthy of landmarking."

CHAP will not take up the issue at this month's meeting but has received Baltimore Heritage's request and will make up the agenda for its January meeting in the next two weeks, said preservation planner Fred Shoken.

Leaders of the private school at 105 Tuscany Road say they haven't decided for certain what they want to do with Castalia but would like permission to tear it down as a way of keeping their options open.

The school can't proceed with demolition unless it receives permission from four community groups because it entered into restrictive covenants with those groups when it sought approval for an expansion six years ago. Those covenants would have to be revised to permit demolition.

The school also has a contract to buy a former Hopkins fraternity house at 3906 Canterbury Road and wants to tear it down to make way for a building for administrative and classroom space. The school now has a deadline of Dec. 21 to buy the fraternity house and needs community consent for demolitions, according to its sale contract. If it doesn't get the community's consent by then, according to headmaster Andrew Martire, the school won't be able to complete its acquisition of the fraternity house.

Castalia was built in 1928 by Hillyer after the school moved from West Chase Street to its current location. Hillyer named it Castalia because the property is fed by a natural spring. Castalia, in Greek mythology, was a nymph whom Apollo transformed into a fountain.

Harris said he and his wife bought the house in 1979, after it had been divided into three dwellings. For 27 years, he said, they lived in part of the house and rented out the rest to medical students, residents, faculty and graduate students from Hopkins. He said they tried to preserve its unusual touches, such as applewood doors and trim, and restore the grounds to the way Hillyer designed them. He said it was an idyllic setting, conducive to creativity, with red foxes and cardinals living in the woods.

Harris said the couple initially had no interest in selling the house when a former headmaster, Merrill Hall, suggested the idea. Even when DeAngelis became editor of JAMA and had to spend much of her time in Chicago, Harris said, they retained the property. But when DeAngelis accepted a five-year extension of her contract with JAMA in 2005, he said, they began serious discussions with Calvert School about selling. Based on their discussions at the time, he said, they got the impression that the school wanted to use the house as an extension of its campus, and they felt comfortable about its plans.

This fall, Harris said, the current headmaster asked to meet with him and shared ideas for a new use for the property, an amphitheater with a jogging trail and other features. Harris said at the time that he would rather see the school build the amphitheater elsewhere on the property and leave the house standing. He said he came away from the meeting thinking the demolition plan was a "dead issue." But then he learned that the demolition request was written into the sale contract for the fraternity house and that school representatives have continued to meet with community groups to change the covenants.

Martire, the current headmaster, said school leaders are grateful to Harris and DeAngelis for their generosity in

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making a gift and selling the house, and appreciate their passion for it. He said the school is still evaluating its plans for Castalia as the deadline nears to buy the fraternity house, and demolition is just one of its options.

"A renovation of Castalia ... is still being discussed thoroughly by the school" as well, he said. "We want the property to be vibrant, full of life and enjoyed by students and faculty. It's a matter of making that happen."

Asked if the school would object to the city's naming the house a city landmark, Martire said that would be a decision for its trustees to take up, and they have not done so.

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**CORRECTION:**

An article in yesterday's Today section about the Castalia property in Baltimore misstated the appraised value before its most recent sale. It was \$1.4 million.

The Sun regrets the errors.

**GRAPHIC: PHOTO(S) / MAP(S)**

1. Johns Hopkins (left), head of Baltimore Heritage, and James Harris, former Castalia owner, are among those protesting Calvert School's plans to tear down the Tuscan Road house. 2. CALVERT SCHOOL SEEKS PERMISSION TO DEMOLISH THIS HOUSE

1. Christopher T. Assaf : Sun Photographer 2. SHIRDELL MCDONALD : SUN NEWS ARTIST

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